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ABSTRACT

This paper examines quality in preservice teacher education, discussing challenges faced and the need for change, noting what change must look like, and describing one university's and community's efforts. It begins with a dean's perspective, discussing the attack on colleges of education and the need to change higher education (student achievement and the future of democracy, the moral need for improvement, and a common moral enterprise). The next section explains how better teachers lead to better schools, discussing collaboration as the key and noting why collaborative partnerships are necessary (the need for simultaneous renewal, who needs to collaborate, the importance of parents and communities, and overcoming problems of reform). An example of a collaborative partnership in El Paso, Texas, highlights how such efforts can raise all children's academic achievement levels, thereby increasing the likelihood of better overall quality of life for both students and the community. This section discusses raising academic achievement; setting standards; data-driven reform, benchmarks, and assessments; embracing accountability for learning; and ensuring continuous dialogue. It describes the impact of this large-scale systemic reform on teacher preparation, noting lessons learned (renewal and reform are difficult, and engagement of the entire community is necessary). (SM)

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40th Charles W. Hunt Memorial Lecture

MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF HIGH-QUALITY TEACHER EDUCATION

Why Higher Education Must Change

Arturo Pacheco

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AACTE 52nd Annual Meeting
Chicago
February 27, 2000

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The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education is a national, voluntary association of colleges and universities with undergraduate or graduate programs to prepare professional educators. The Association supports programs in data gathering, equity, leadership development, networking, policy analysis, professional issues, and scholarship.

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Charles W. Hunt
1880–1973

With a passion for teaching and a love of people, Charles Wesley Hunt helped shape teacher education in America for nearly half a century. His career spanned the range of educational responsibilities—teacher; university dean; president of the State Teachers College at Oneonta, New York; and volunteer in national associations for teacher education.

As secretary-treasurer first of the American Association of Teachers Colleges and subsequently of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), which he helped create, Dr. Hunt participated directly in the changes sweeping teacher education during the mid-20th century. He worked diligently to develop AACTE as the vehicle to stimulate and effect necessary changes in the education of teachers. The tools for change were varied, but of special significance were institutional accreditation, qualitative standards for effective programs, and inclusion of all types of higher education institutions.

When the lecture series honoring him was established in 1960, Dr. Hunt observed:

> In the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, we have come from our varying stations across the nation to share our experience, to pool our strength, and to play our role in the galaxy of institutional organizations which are very important in our national culture. The gradual assembling of all [collegiate] institutions for the preparation of teachers into one working group is a movement of great significance.

AACTE is indebted to the life's work of Charles Hunt and honors him with this memorial lecture at each Annual Meeting.

INTRODUCTION

It's a great pleasure to be here today and to be able to share both my thoughts and my experiences in teacher education. I was honored to be given the opportunity to deliver the 40th Charles Hunt Memorial Lecture, and as I read a few of the Hunt Lectures from the past decade, I was even more honored and humbled by the invitation.

In my comments today, I want to do the following things. After telling you where I am coming from, both figuratively and literally, I want to make a few comments about this apparent state of siege that we find ourselves in. It's not too easy being in a college of education these days; it's even harder being a dean of an ed school. I will describe the challenges we face and why we—that is, those of us in higher education—must change. I will go on to talk about what some of that change needs to look like. Finally, I will describe how we have proceeded in my own university and community of El Paso over the past eight years, and conclude with some lessons learned and questions that remain from that experience. These are lessons and questions that I think are relevant to other institutions and communities, at least urban communities like El Paso.

PERSPECTIVES OF A DEAN OF EDUCATION

The perspective that I bring to you is one of a working dean of a college of education at the University of Texas at El Paso. I first became a teacher somewhat accidentally 35 years ago, just after receiving my BA degree in philosophy. I served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Asia, where I taught middle school and high school English as a Second Language, and it was this early life-changing experience that sparked my interest in teaching and learning and has kept me fascinated ever since.

Colleges of Education Under Attack

I speak to you today as a person who has spent the past 30 years in higher education—mostly in colleges of education—and I do so with some trepidation. Higher education has been under a lot of pressure lately, and often it is the colleges of education that are the focal point of attacks. There is a lot of interest today in the quality of our public schools, and lots of criticism as well. That criticism extends to the teachers and to the colleges and universities that prepare teachers. In last year's Hunt Lecture, Nancy Cole, a former dean of education and now president of the Educational Testing Service, reminded us of how bad it was. She called her talk "Sharing the Bull's-Eye." She imagined it couldn't get much worse. Little did she know.

The intensity of the attack on those whose job it is to prepare teachers has increased. Most of the focus of the criticism has been on colleges of education, the presumed responsible party. We hear this in report after report. Last year, Congress mandated that a national "report card" on teacher training institutions be put in place by this year so that we could better

judge their quality. The recent report of the American Council on Education, *To Touch the Future* (1999), called on university presidents to "take a hard look at quality" of their programs, and to "get rigorous external approval." Just before that, at the meeting of governors for the third National Education Summit, many governors were more harshly critical, even calling for the closing of all education colleges if they can't meet the expectations of preparing more and better teachers.

Although many of these criticisms are politically motivated, or come from a base of ignorance, some raise legitimate concerns, and the criticisms are a double-edged sword. On the one hand, the attention to educator preparation programs is good in calling for self-renewal and improvement of often neglected and underfunded programs in universities. On the other hand, if no improvement is forthcoming, programs in teacher preparation will continue to be blamed for many things, some of which are beyond their control. Even John Goodlad, one of the staunchest supporters of teacher education over the past 40 years, has provided us with, as David Imig puts it, a "surprisingly negative" assessment of the current state of teacher preparation (Goodlad, 1999).

It's Time to Change Higher Education

No, I do not believe it is time to abolish colleges of education. There is, in fact, a lot of positive change going on, and many programs across the country have improved and are producing better prepared teachers. There is a wide gap between what is actually going on with reform and renewal and public perceptions of teacher preparation programs in colleges of education. Amid the array of bullets there are signs of positive change. The announcement last month by the governors of both New York and California—that they are including in their state budgets proposals to reinvigorate teacher preparation and subsidize the costs of teacher preparation with grants to students who choose teaching as a career—are encouraging. The California proposal even included a substantial bonus for teachers who successfully complete the process of certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. This is a very interesting development in what have been very difficult times.

But we do have to make some changes. Higher education does have to change its thinking with regard to teacher preparation programs. Universities have an important role to play in the improvement of both America's schools and the teachers who teach our children, and they must do a better job of it. Why must they change?

The Achievement of Children and the Future of Democracy

In many ways, the role of public schooling has not changed much from the vision held by the founders of American democracy. Thomas Jefferson and other framers of the *Declaration of Independence* knew that democracy depends on an educated citizenry, and the way to ensure that was with a

system of public education (Peterson, 1984). There is a clear line of this thinking from Jefferson to John Dewey to John Goodlad. The education of children is the greatest moral enterprise of the nation, and the nation's future as a democratic society depends on it. Teachers are the stewards of that enterprise. They are the stewards of the common good. Ensuring a highly literate and educated citizenry is not only good for the individual students, it is essential to the common good if we are to have a viable democratic society.

The Pressing Moral Need for Improvement

Second, those of us in higher education must work to improve the schools themselves as well as the preparation of teachers for the schools. We know that there is a very uneven quality of both teaching and the schools across the nation. This is particularly true of the urban schools, which are responsible for the education of most poor and minority youngsters. If there is a crisis in American education, it is particularly evident in the urban schools of America's cities, which now serve one of every four American children. We know that these schools receive the least academic and financial resources and are often staffed by the least qualified teachers, who often leave urban schools after only a short time of teaching. As described in many reports, the resulting academic achievement of the youngsters in these schools is often far lower than their age-mates in suburban public schools.[1] Children in our rural schools face similar needs and hardships, there are just fewer of them.

A Common Moral Enterprise

Lastly, we must prepare better teachers for our nation's schools because it is the right thing to do. It is the moral thing to do. This is true for *all* teachers of *all* of our children; it is especially true of teachers in urban schools who prepare mostly poor and minority youngsters. For these children, the public school has always represented opportunity to move ahead, to move out of poverty, to enter adulthood as fully prepared and responsible citizens. Never has this been more true than it is today. Without the academic achievement marked by a high school diploma or a college degree, young people will have far more limited futures than they have in the past. As our society moves rapidly toward an information- and service-based economy, teachers have an even more vital role to play in more adequately preparing our young people for it. College and university programs that prepare teachers can make a major contribution to society here, through the preparation of the very best teachers for the schools and the children that need them most.

BETTER TEACHERS, BETTER SCHOOLS

More than ever, our children's future depends on better teachers. The logic is simple and straightforward: better teachers lead to better schools. Better schools lead to better children. Better children lead to a better democracy.

Collaboration is the Key: Why Collaborative Partnerships Are Necessary

While the logic is simple and straightforward, the enterprise of preparing better teachers is an exceedingly complex task. We need teachers who can prepare youngsters to function in a high-tech, high-information society, who are sensitive to and understand the richness that comes with a diverse society, who take seriously the task of preparing fully and rigorously *all* children, not just the traditional 30 to 50% who have headed for college in the past. Add to this the need to prepare teachers for an accountability driven K-12 system, often equally driven by a standards-based curriculum that demands evidence of learning and meeting standards, and we make the task even more difficult.

Because this task of preparing effective teachers is so complex and involves so many different kinds of knowledge and skills, it is only through broad and deep collaboration that we will be successful. No single party can do it. We are just beginning to see positive results of some of the collaborative reform efforts that have been put into place in the last 10 years. These initiatives have advanced under the rubrics of simultaneous renewal (the National Network for Educational Renewal), co-reform (the Georgia statewide initiative), the National Science Foundation's notion of systemic reform, or the Education Trust's national work on K-16 partnerships. All of these efforts require deep and sustained collaboration, and it is looking like the chances for success are greatly enhanced through it.

Separate Reforms Won't Do: The Necessity of Simultaneous Renewal

What we do know from those who have studied the history of reform of both the public schools and university programs that prepare teachers is that separate reforms won't do. Since there has always been some relationship between the preparation of teachers and the schools to which they are sent, the logic of a necessary connection, if not simultaneous reform efforts, seems self-evident. This has been made clearer in the work of John Goodlad, who has called for the *simultaneous renewal* of the public schools and the programs that prepare teachers for them. Independent and separate reforms—often headed in different directions—have been very much a part of the problem.

Who Needs to Collaborate?

Who needs to collaborate? To ask this question is to ask who is responsible for the preparation of teachers. Another seemingly simple question to

answer, it has been traditionally answered by pointing to colleges of education, where most programs of teacher preparation are administered. Arts and sciences faculty, for example, not only point to education faculty as holding the responsibility, they often join the chorus of those who are very critical of teacher preparation.

The correct answer, however, is much more complex. In our two largest states, California and Texas, for example, responsibility for the preparation of teachers suggests a different answer.

In California, prospective teachers must first earn a bachelor's degree, typically in liberal studies, before pursuing a fifth year of training to become a teacher. In Texas, where prospective elementary teachers earn a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies and secondary students major in their area of specialization, all students have been limited to 18 to 24 hours of education courses. In both states, the bulk of university coursework is in the arts and sciences. Yet it is not uncommon to find that most arts and sciences faculty members feel little or no responsibility for the preparation of teachers through the courses that they teach.

Rightfully, and mindfully, John Goodlad has called for the necessity of a three-way partnership for teacher preparation: colleges of education, colleges of arts and sciences, and the public schools. The public school partnership in this endeavor is critically important. All too often, teachers and administrators of the public schools have also been critical of the quality of university graduates in teacher preparation. Although they represent the profession and have much to gain from the collaborative preparation of teachers for the public schools, they often dismiss university training as irrelevant or too theoretical and abstract. They greet newly hired teachers from the university with a "welcome to the real world" and let the novice teachers know that much of their "ivory tower" learning won't count for much in real classrooms with real children.

For their part, universities and university faculty members charged with the preparation of teachers have not helped this situation much. Often away from the experience in public school classrooms for many years, quite a few professors are out of touch with what is going on in schools and, in addition, often take an elitist stance toward their colleagues in the public schools, assuming the guise of the expert over a profession in which they have many stories but little current practice.[2] Unlike the faculty members of medical schools that continue to serve the same real patients that their medical students serve, a large number of professors who prepare teachers talk about the teaching and learning of children in the public schools without bothering to even visit the schools where the children are. Instead of seeing themselves as members of a profession with critical ties to practice, they sometimes instead ape the scholarship agendas of their colleagues in the arts and sciences.

It's no wonder that so many schoolteachers look back to their university preparation with a sense of bitterness and frustration. In Diana Rigden's

deeply critical report of her survey of teachers, one respondent said: "'I am constantly amazed,' wrote one, 'at how our profession is trained by folks who often have never been successful teachers, and if they were, it's been so long ago the experience isn't relevant'"[3] (1996, p. 15).

Public school teachers can and should collaborate in the preparation of teachers, sharing the responsibility with university faculty members from education and from the arts and sciences. This tripartite partnership and collaboration would go a long way in preparing better teachers for the schools and thus increase the likelihood of academic success for all youngsters. At a minimum, there would be a bridge between theory and practice, and like the clinical faculty in teaching hospitals, the clinical faculty members in the schools could do much to ease the transition from the university to the public school classroom. In many cases, the student about to graduate and become a teacher is faced with the challenge of integrating the seemingly disconnected experiences of visits to three alien worlds—that of the arts and sciences disciplines, the pedagogical world of colleges of education, and the world of school practice, where the children live. Bringing the caretakers of these worlds together to work with future teachers and to help shape their experience is absolutely essential if we want to create better teaching and learning environments in which children will thrive.

A Critical Fourth Partner: Parents and Communities

There is yet a fourth critical partner that is necessary to the collaboration to improve schools and teaching as well as the programs that prepare teachers. Almost all reform efforts have left out parents and community members as key players, especially in working class communities. Yet parents, with their common interests in the success and future of their children, can be crucial players in helping to make change happen. Schools, and the children who inhabit them, live in communities that shape them, and often these communities determine what kinds of places they will be. Are schools the smooth extensions of the learning that goes on first in families and communities, or are they radical disjunctures in the experience of children? Are schools places where parents and community members take great pride and ownership, or are they places that are alien and unwelcoming? Are teachers comfortable and familiar with the full lives of the children in their care, or are they unaware of the daily experience of children, uncomfortable and sometimes frightened by the communities from which the children come? Do parents and teachers recognize their common purpose in the achievement and well-being of the children, or do they approach each other as antagonists working toward different ends?

Educational reform efforts have most often been "top-down" affairs, leaving out key players, most notably teachers, but also other important players such as parents and community members. With regard to parents, neither school people nor university faculty members typically have much

expertise in working with parents in their communities, and it may take additional expertise in drawing parents into the life of the school in significant ways. This is particularly true in working class or minority communities, where there are often great differences between the culture of the school and the culture of the family and community.

Overcoming the Problems of Reform

Whether they are called programmatic regularities, guiding narratives, modes of thought, or paradigms, the closed "cultures" of the public school, colleges of education, the arts and sciences disciplines, and families and communities all are culture-like systems that are initially resistant to our understanding, let alone to change and reform. Any successful collaboration leading to simultaneous renewal of the schools and programs that prepare educators will have to take this fact into account.

Sitting at the table together will be a necessary but not sufficient first step. Beyond bringing these stakeholders to sit at the table together, a long and extended conversation and dialogue will be necessary, and it will, over time, provide a common language. The diversity of the discourse is a major problem, with key actors who work within different narratives often talking past one another, and with little understanding of each other. A common language is a necessary precondition for finding a shared vision and common values. It is this shared vision and common values which, ultimately, will both give meaning to a reform agenda and sustain it over time. The different narratives not only determine the discourse; they frame the different organizational structures of each culture, making them seem impenetrable to one another.

EL PASO: AN EXAMPLE OF A COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP

Let me provide you with a concrete example from my own community, El Paso, Texas. It's an example of what a collaborative partnership can do in a single community when its members come together for the common good: raising the academic achievement levels of *all* children, and thereby increasing the likelihood of a better overall quality of life for both the children and their community. I tell you about El Paso with considerable hesitance and humility—with hesitance because we are very much a work in progress and there is much unfinished business and work left to do; with humility because I am but one player in a very important cast of hundreds in our community.

El Paso is on the Mexican border in far-west Texas, just at the point where the Rocky Mountains leave the United States and enter Mexico. It is due south of Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Denver, Colorado. We are the largest North American city along the 2,000-mile U.S.-Mexico border and our name, El Paso del Norte, literally means the pass to the north through the mountains. We have served as a major north-south passage and trade route for 400 years and trace our origins to 1598, when the Spanish ex-

plorer Juan de Onate stopped to celebrate finding a passage to the north on his way to the founding of Santa Fe.

We are an urban city of 700,000 people and across the Rio Grande River from the Mexican border city of Juarez, with 1.5 million people. Like most cities along the Mexican border, our population is mostly poor and working class. Unemployment is still in double digits in El Paso, and success in education, especially public schooling, is very important to us. We still see success in public schools as a way out of poverty and a way into participation in civic life.

I have been working for the past eight years with my colleagues on the faculty at the university and my colleagues in the public schools to improve the quality of teaching in our community, and we think that we've had some success in doing this. I'm here to share some of that success with you, as well as some of the struggles that we've faced. I also bring you a perspective from Texas, the so-called "accountability state." I want to let you know what it has looked like so far.

UT-El Paso is a medium-sized, public university of 15,000 students—the only university for hundreds of miles in that part of Texas, and our student are mostly working class Latino students who are first-generation college students. We serve 135,000 school children within a 20-mile radius of the university. Our responsibility to them and their parents is to provide them with the very best teachers that we can. We have put most of our energy—and our hopes—in producing good teachers.

A K-16 Partnership: The Collaborative for Academic Excellence

In 1992, the leaders of the El Paso community came together with this task: to substantially raise the academic achievement of all children in El Paso. As a working class community with limited resources, these leaders knew that no single entity—a school or school district, a community group, or the university—could do it alone.

Taking the first step, the university president brought together the superintendents of the three largest school districts, the president of the community college, the heads of both the greater chamber of commerce and the Hispanic chamber of commerce, the mayor and the county judge, the director of the regional education service center, and the lead organizer of the major grassroots community organization in El Paso. In El Paso and other settings across Texas, it was the church-based, Saul Alinsky-type organization, the Texas Industrial Areas Foundation, that has partnered with universities and the public schools to bring about significant engagement of parents in the reform of the schools and teacher preparation programs.4

Together, they formed the El Paso Collaborative for Academic Excellence. They have been meeting bimonthly for nearly eight years. The university president, who has only missed two of the meetings in eight years, chairs the group. The collaborative sets policy and direction for much of the work that goes on between the meetings, and its staff, now about 30

people, work with schools across the region to make the reforms happen. Out of this work has come the "buy-in" for the major systemic reform initiatives set in place over the years as well as the common themes and new organizational structures that make the work possible. The collaborative's work has been supported with both state and local funds as well as with generous multi-year grants from the U.S. Department of Education, the National Science Foundation, the Pew Charitable Trusts, and several others. It started with one person in a small office at the university.

Although the bottom line for the collaborative has always been raising the academic achievement of all children in El Paso, common themes have emerged out of dialogue and engagement with the work, as well as the dialectic between policy initiatives and everyday practice. It has been very difficult work.

I would now like to briefly describe the common themes and then the organizational structures that make the work possible, with a focus on initial teacher preparation. By necessity, in this kind of talk, my description can only be a brief one, although far more detailed descriptions are available.

Raising Academic Achievement

Raising academic achievement is in everyone's interest. Although seemingly a truism, we know that not everyone acts as if this were the case. Everyone has much to gain in raising the achievement of all youngsters—parents, the community, the various educational institutions, the business community, and most importantly, the youngsters themselves. In El Paso, this has meant raising the expectations for all children so that all children both graduate from high school and are prepared to enter college, whether they do so or not. This seemingly obvious point is not readily apparent to all sectors of the community. There are some who haven't believed that it could *or should* be done. There are others who have said that it is far more important to prepare low-level service workers ready for work instead of college.

Setting Standards

Second, setting standards is very important, especially in communities like El Paso. One of the best ways to set academic goals is to set some high and rigorous standards for children to achieve. Teams of teachers, university arts and sciences faculty, community members, and parents spent two years setting standards—borrowing the best knowledge from available national and state standards. After two years, K-12 content standards were available in seven areas at the 4th-, 8th-, and 12th-grade levels.

Some have asked: How did we ever get university faculty, particularly from the arts and sciences, engaged in such an activity—setting fourth-grade standards in science and mathematics, for example? The El Paso Collaborative, which oversaw this effort, made a clever strategic move. It

began with the setting of 12th-grade standards, basically asking the question, "What should every high school graduate know and be able to do upon exit from high school and entrance into college?" Almost all university professors have something to say about this. From there it wasn't too difficult to take an engaged faculty downward to the setting of standards at the eighth- and fourth-grade levels.

Data-Driven Reform, Benchmarks, and Assessments

Third, all of our reform efforts must be data driven and set appropriate benchmarks and assessments to let us know how we are doing. We knew from the start that any significant change would have to show up in the data, whether we were talking about state test scores, graduation rates, participation and success rates in college prep courses, university retention rates, or scores on the state-mandated exit examinations for teachers. From the start, we have always begun with a rather cold and often painful examination of the data of where we are. We have done this collectively, across school districts, schools, and the university. It is this data analysis that has driven the major thrusts of the change effort. It has been helped by our funders; all of them demand a careful documentation of the impact of their support through the continuous examination and evaluation of the data.

The same was true for standards. Setting high and rigorous standards was only the first step; we also needed means to measure our progress toward meeting the standards. Benchmarks and rubrics were set for the standards, beginning in mathematics, science, and literacy. These would tell us how we were progressing. This work is still underway and in the process of being implemented.

Embracing Accountability for Learning

Fourth, we have embraced accountability rather than fighting it. As most people know, Texas has established a rigorous accountability system, both for K-12 and for teacher preparation programs. Rather than resist this accountability, the members of the El Paso Collaborative embraced it, knowing full well that it was important for districts, schools, principals, and teachers to be held accountable for the learning of the children. Without accountability, the status quo would be maintained, as would the dozens of excuses for the low achievement of minority and poor children. This was also true in the university, where the teacher preparation program was held accountable for the preparation and pass rates of its graduates, even though it is essentially an open-admissions university with many working class students entering underprepared for college.

The Need for Continuous Dialogue

Lastly, we have paid lots of attention to the need for continuous conversation and dialogue. In 1992, the El Paso Collaborative began with

schoolwide teams of teachers and principals examining the data on student achievement—rather depressing data at that time—and used those data to guide the planning of a strategy for change, both at the school-site level and more systemically across districts and across the region. This focus on discussion, conversation, and dialogue has marked all aspects of what we have attempted to do over the past several years. What we are doing in teacher preparation, for example, is the direct result of continuous conversation with teachers and principals in the schools, our students, and our colleagues in the arts and sciences.

Let me share our most recent example. Last week, after a year of planning, the El Paso Collaborative held a regional education summit for 300 business, civic, community, and education leaders in El Paso. The two-day summit included the active participation of the presidents of the university and the local community college, the mayor, the county judge, all of the superintendents, the complete Texas state legislative delegation from El Paso, and our local U.S. Congressman. Major business CEOs and community leaders, school board members, and teachers were also involved in both the planning and the summit itself. Also involved were the state commissioner of education and the president of the Texas Business and Education Coalition.

The summit delegates considered a set of 36 recommendations that were the result of 12 task forces that had met during the prior year. Initially, both in the year-long task forces and in the summit itself, there were great differences in perception about what the educational needs and goals of our community ought to be, with some sectors of the business community arguing for an emphasis on low-level vocational and school-to-work programs. The discussions across the table of the planning group meetings have often been heated and at cross-purposes; yet it is only through these continuous conversations that we have hammered out a series of planning documents and position papers on goals for the community.

At the end of the process, all 300 delegates had the opportunity to vote on supporting 10 overarching goals for our community, which they then presented to educational leaders and elected officials—both local and state—as a mandate representing the will of our community. You will be interested in the top three goals for our community:

1. All students in El Paso should be required to complete a rigorous, college preparatory academic core curriculum, which includes fluency in two or more languages.

2. We will ensure a sufficient and high-quality teacher workforce, PK-16, in El Paso, by preparing teachers to teach rigorous, standards-meeting courses and by requiring all teachers to be certified in the subject areas that they are teaching.

3. We will establish a regional campaign, led by elected officials, business leaders, educational leaders, parents, and community members, that identifies education as among the community's highest priorities, that focuses attention on all students succeeding, and that encourages high levels of participation in school board elections and in education decision-making forums.

What Has Been the Impact on Teacher Preparation?

It is in this greater context of large-scale systemic reform and constant dialogue among key stakeholders that we have embarked on the reform of teacher preparation within the university. The overall reform effort of the El Paso Collaborative in the schools has both guided and pushed the changes in teacher preparation. In many cases, we have been trying to catch up with the positive changes that have been implemented in the schools. This is an important point and an illustration of what John Goodlad has advocated with the notion of simultaneous renewal. Changes in teacher preparation programs have to go hand in hand with improvements in the schools.

I will briefly describe three of the elements that characterize our teacher preparation program, all of which have come out of conversations with our colleagues in the schools and the university.

- **Preservice teacher preparation is collaboratively designed and managed.** Public school teachers and principals, university faculty (including arts and sciences faculty), and community members work together to design, implement, and evaluate the restructured teacher education program, which is continuously assessed.

- **Teacher preparation is field based.** Elementary, middle school, and secondary interns go through the program in cohorts and spend most of two semesters in about 40 partner schools for a total of 650 classroom contact hours of fieldwork. About 400 interns are in these schools in any given semester.

- **A parental engagement component has been added to teacher preparation.** Interns, mentor teachers, and university faculty spend time learning about the school community, including required home visits for student interns. Alternatively, parent centers have been set up in most of the schools, inviting parents to take an active partnership in the learning of their children. Critical pedagogy readings and discussion are part of a required course designed to foster the involvement of future teachers with parents and community.

Lessons Learned, Questions Remaining

What lessons have we learned? We have learned several, and I want to highlight a few that have been important for those of us in the university.

- **Renewal and reform, like democracy, is hard and messy.** Significant and positive renewal and reform is extremely difficult and takes a long time, and the commitment to continuous improvement has to be taken on for the long term. Yet we need to be more willing to take risks and to move more quickly, even at the risk of making a few mistakes along the way. Universities, and university professors, are notorious for planning things to death. Developing a shared vision is critical, but, as Michael Fullan suggests, that vision is more likely to come out of active and widespread engagement in an agenda of change than it is out of extensive planning. Sometimes, a mature vision and strategic planning come later (Fullan, 1993).

- **Engagement of the entire university is necessary.** We have too long relied on (or blamed) colleges of education for the quality of the teachers that we produce. Yet it takes the very best thinking of our mathematics professors, our political science professors, and our humanities professors, working side by side with our education professors, to design and implement a first-rate teacher preparation program. Actually, as I have described it, it takes a whole community to produce good teachers, including our colleagues in the public schools, parents, and community leaders.

- **Leadership from the senior administration is imperative and has to be continuously cultivated.** We all know what can happen when there is a change in university presidents, provosts, or even deans. When this happens, it sometimes seems easier to move on to another institution where our change agenda will be better received. Yet one of the benefits of a collaborative K-16 change agenda is that it is not about my agenda, but about *our* agenda, which is widely shared by a community of change agents. The power of such an agenda is that it can shape a new dean, provost, or president. Our task is to keep that agenda before the senior leadership of the university. On my campus, the deans and faculties of engineering, science, and liberal arts are all very seriously engaged in teacher preparation and work in the schools. Our dean of the College of Liberal Arts, for example, not only has faculty members engaged in teacher preparation, but also leads an effort in which faculty members are assigned to schools and are doing other things such as helping with school community surveys, working on parental engagement, or helping to set up labs in elementary schools.

- **Although the moral argument should win the day, showing how it is in everyone's interest to engage in the improvement of teacher preparation helps a lot.** This is a difficult issue. I am often amazed at faculty members who sometimes forget what we are about as learning and teaching institutions. Indeed, we have all seen those who treat their workplace as a mailing address where they will spend minimal time or, conversely, spend a lot of time on very personal and individual agendas. How do we convince all faculty members and all teachers in schools that they have a common moral purpose, both to their profession and more importantly, to children who deserve caring and competent teachers in all of their classrooms? We must find ways to convince them that it is in *their* interest as well as that of the children and the community.

- **Serious and continuous commitment to collaboration and continuous improvement is necessary.** As I talk to my colleagues at home and those across the country who have embarked on long-term change agendas, a constant theme is, how do we keep it going? How do we keep ourselves going? Maintaining the status quo and resisting change seem far more natural than notions of continuous improvement and renewal, even when you are convinced by the moral argument that improvement is desirable and necessary. We must find ways to sustain ourselves and a reform agenda for the long term.

WHAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE?
KEEPING ONE'S EYES ON THE PRIZE

These are all serious questions and dilemmas with which we all have to grapple. I think that what has sustained us in El Paso—both individually and as a community with a common purpose—has been the constant reminder to "keep your eyes on the prize." We constantly remind each other and ourselves about the bottom line: the academic success of all of our children. From the president of our university to the interns about to be teachers, we constantly remind ourselves that the future well-being of these children—and of our community—depends on their success in our public schools. Without them, we are all doomed.

In conclusion, we have been at this work of self-improvement for eight years. The initial results are impressive, especially when taken in the context of where we were when we started. There is much left to do, and we have only begun. We are very much a work in progress. I hope that you will invite me back in about 10 years to see how we've fared. I will still be in El Paso working on the same agenda with my colleagues.

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NOTES

1. See, for example, the state-by-state data in the report of the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, *What matters most: Teaching for America's future* (New York: Author, 1996), and the *Education Week* annual report, *Quality Counts '98* (January 8, 1998). For the best general portrait of the condition of schooling, see John I. Goodlad, *A Place Called School* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1984).

2. These findings are reported in the recent Public Agenda survey, S. Farkas & J. Johnson with A. Duffett, *Different drummers: How teachers of teachers view public education* (New York: Public Agenda, 1997).

3. See also Robert Ciscell, "Who's Teaching America's Teachers?" *Educational Leadership* (March, 1993), 14-15, and Harriet Tyson, *Who Will Teach the Children?* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1994).

4. For a report on the IAF efforts in Texas, see Dennis Shirley, "Community Organizing for Parental Engagement—The Texas Collaboratives of the Texas Industrial Areas Foundation," in *Public Policy and Community*, ed. R. Wilson (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1997).

ABOUT THE HUNT LECTURER

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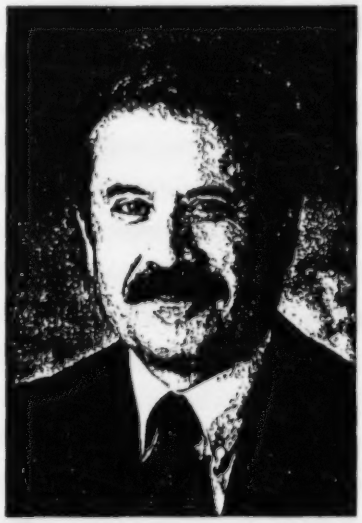

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